

**“The Reach Of God!”**  
**Jonah 1-2**

**Introduction:**

1. Will You Head Back With Me To The Book Of Jonah?
  - Where We Are Going To Spend Some More Time:
    - This Morning, Looking At Another Theme:
      - That Runs Throughout The Book!
    - And That Can Be Seen Especially In The First 2 Chapters!
2. **IE:** One Of The Things I Enjoyed Doing:
  - As A Boy:
    - And Even Now, As An Adult!
  - Is To Read Books & Stories:
    - About Christian Missionaries!
    - Missionaries Like:
      - J. Hudson Taylor - Who Went To China & Even Lived Like The Chinese, In Order To Reach Them For Christ!
      - Or - Adoniram Judson - Who Was The First American Missionary - And Went To Share The Gospel To The People Of Burma, Even At Great Personal Tragedy & Loss!
    - Or Even More Recent Missionaries Like:
      - Nate Saint & Jim Elliot - Who Were Killed In Their Quest To Bring The Gospel To A Hard To Reach Tribe Of Indians In Ecuador In The 1950's!
    - Really - You Could Go On & On!
  - But, As A Boy, I Enjoyed These Books Because:
    - The Were Filled With **Action & Adventure!**
    - But Not The Kind That Brought About Death!
      - But The Kind That Would Bring Life!
      - And The Gospel Of Jesus Christ!
3. As We Are Back In Jonah Again This Morning:
  - I Want You To Know That:
    - The Book Of Jonah Is Really Also A Missionary Book!
      - And It Too Is Filled With Action & Adventure!
  - But It Is Not So Much About:
    - Jonah As A Missionary!
    - As It Is About God Himself – As A Missionary!
  - You See – In This Book:
    - We Don't Just Learn:
      - About Jonah!
    - But We Also Learn A Lot About God!
      - And His Heart For Others!
      - And His **Reach** To Others!
4. And So - This Morning:
  - I Want You To Look With Me At:
    - **The Reach Of God!**
  - Jonah Thought He Could Flee From:
    - “The Presence Of God!”
      - But He Couldn't!
    - Because The Reach Of The Lord:
      - Extends Everywhere!

\* First - Let's Look At:

1. **How Far The Lord's Reach Is!**
  - The Lord's Reach Can Go Very, Very Far!
    - And We See This In His Reach:
      - To The Ninevites!
    - In 1:1-2 - “Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, / Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me!”
      - Nineveh Was About 600 Miles From Jerusalem!

- And Although 600 Miles Doesn't Seem That Far To Us Today - It Could Have Taken Weeks For Someone To Travel That Distance Back In Jonah's Time!
- But It Wasn't Just The Distance & Mileage That Made Nineveh So Far From Israel!
  - It Was The Kind Of Place Nineveh Was As Well!
    - It Was A Wicked City!
- And To Jonah, Nineveh Would Have Felt Very, Very Far!
  - Far From His Own Home!
  - Far From His Own People!
  - And Far From His Own God!
- And, At Least From Jonah's Point Of View:
  - They Were Too Far Away To Be Reached By God!
  - And Too Far Away To Be Reached By Him!
- But Nineveh:
  - Was Not Too Far Away:
    - To Be Reached By The Lord!
  - And His *Pity* For Them & Their Sinful Condition!
    - We See Even More Of His Concern In The Very Last Verse Of Jonah:
      - 4:11 - "And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?"
  - The Lord Was Concerned Enough For Nineveh:
    - To Send Jonah To Them!
      - Who Knew The Truth & Could Share The Truth With Them!
- There Is No Place On Earth:
  - Where The Lord Cannot Reach – With His Pity & His Grace!
    - The Lord's Reach Can Go Very, Very Far!
- Not Only To Nineveh!
  - But To The World As A Whole!
  - After All – Look At How Far:
    - God Sent His Only Begotten Son, The Lord Jesus!
      - In Order To Rescue You & Me From Our Sin!
    - Jesus Came All The Way From The Glories Of Heaven:
      - To This Humble Earth!
      - To Show Us His Pity & Grace & Concern!
  - In John 8:38-40 - Jesus Said - "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. / And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. / And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day!"
- The Lord's Reach Can Go Very, Very Far!

\* Next - See With Me:

2. ***How Wide The Lord's Reach Is!***

- The Lord's Reach Is Very, Very Wide!
  - And We See This In His Reach:
    - To The Sailors On The Ship Jonah Embarked To Take Him To Tarshish!
  - In 1:3 - "But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD!"
    - The Ship Jonah Found Going To Tarshish:
      - Was Filled With Sailors!
  - And Although These Sailors:
    - Were In Joppa:
      - Which Was Pretty Close To Israel!
      - They Might Have Even Heard Of The One True God!
  - But They Were Still Very Far From The Lord!
    - For When God Sent The Great Storm After Jonah:
      - 1:5 Tells Us That - "Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god!"
  - There Were Many Sailors On That Ship!

- They Probably Came From Many Different Places Around The Mediterranean!
- And They Worshiped & Prayed To Many Different Gods!
- And From The Standpoint Of Jonah:
  - They Were Lost! And They *Were* Lost!
- But Those Sailors:
  - Were Not *So* Lost:
    - That They Could Not Be Reached By The Lord!
  - And By The *Peace*:
    - That Only He Could Give Them!
- And Those Sailors:
  - Became Unwitting Participants In God's Divine Plan For His Prophet!
    - Even Though Jonah Was Running From God In Disobedience:
  - God Was Still In Control!
    - And Directed Jonah:
      - To That Specific Port In Joppa!
      - And To That Specific Ship!
      - And To Those Specific Sailors!
    - So That He Could Reach Them Too!
- And Look At The Result Of God's Wide Reach:
  - To Those Sailors - Even While The Storm Was Raging!
  - 1:14-16 - "Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleased thee. / So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. / Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows!"
    - All Of Those Sailors!
      - With All Of Their Different Backgrounds & People & Religions & Sins!
    - They All Turned To The One True God!
      - In Prayer / In Worship / And With A New Commitment To Him As *Their* Lord & As *Their* God!
- There Is No Person On Earth:
  - To Whom The Lord Cannot Reach – With His Peace!
    - The Lord's Reach Is Very, Very Wide!
  - **IE:** We've Been Learning John 3:16 In Our Good News Clubs!
    - Often We Think How Simple This Verse Is!
    - But There Was Also A Time In Your Life:
      - That You Did Not Know This Verse!
  - Yet It Shows How Wide God's Love Is!
    - And How Wide His Reach Is!
    - John 3:16 - "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life!"
- The Lord's Reach Is Very, Very Wide!
  - As Fanny Crosby Once Wrote - "O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood, To every believer, the promise of God; The vilest offender who truly believes, That moment from Jesus a pardon receives!"
    - This Is How Wide God's Reach Is!

\* But We Also See In Jonah:

### 3. ***How High The Lord's Reach Is!***

- And The Lord's Reach Extends Very, Very High!
  - And We See This In His Reach:
    - Even To The Sky!
  - In 1:4 - As God Was Going After Jonah - "But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken!"
    - It Was A "Great Wind!"
    - And It Created A "Mighty Tempest!"
  - And It Was So Powerful:
    - That Even A Ship As Strong As "A Ship Of Tarshish" Could Be Broken Up!
  - Not Sure Exactly When:
    - God Sent This "Great Wind" After Jonah!
    - But Imagine If The Day Was Clear & Sunny & Calm – Like Today!

- When Jonah First Stepped Foot Onto That Ship!
- Jonah Might Have Been Thinking:
  - All Is Well!
  - I'm On My Way!
  - **My** Mission Is Accomplished! To Get Away From God's Presence & Purpose For Him!
- But After Jonah Went Below Deck:
  - To Get Some Rest!
  - Then The Weather Changes!
    - Drastically & Dangerously!
- Because Neither The Heavens Nor Even The Wind:
  - Were Too High:
    - To Be Reached By The Lord!
  - To Display His **Power!**
    - And To Use His Power To Get The Attention Of Everyone Who Was On That Ship!
  - Psalm 104:1-3 - "Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. / Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: / Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind!"
- There Is Nowhere In Heaven & Nowhere On Earth:
  - Where The Lord Cannot Reach – With His Power!
    - The Lord's Reach Can Go Very, Very High!
  - The Lord Can & Sometimes Will:
    - Move Heaven & Earth To Reach Out To Even One Individual!
      - Like He Did To Jonah!
      - Like He Has Done To Others!
    - **IE:** Remember The Story Of Martin Luther? October 31 Should Not Only Be Known For Trick Or Treating! It Should Also Be Known For The Beginning Of The Reformation - When, In 1517, Martin Luther Nailed His 95 Theses To The Door Of The Roman Catholic Church In Wittenburg, Germany! How Did God First Get His Attention? With A Thunderstorm! With A Lightning Bolt That Struck Dangerously Close To Him! And God Used That To Start Martin Luther's Journey To The Truth Of The Gospel!
- But God Demonstrated His Power To Save:
  - To Us All - When Jesus Himself:
    - Showed That Nothing Was Too High For His Reach As Well!
  - All Jesus Had To Do:
    - To Calm A Mighty Wind & A Troubled Sea!
    - Was To Speak His Word, And Say:
      - "Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm!" And Mark 4:41 Records The Reaction Of His Disciples - "And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"
  - If The Lord's Power Can Reach:
    - As High As The Heavens To:
      - Send A Great Wind!
      - And Even To Stop A Great Storm!
  - The Lord's Power Can Reach:
    - To Anyone In Any Place In This World!
    - To Save! And To Sustain!
- The Lord's Reach Can Go Very, Very High!

\* But Look Also At:

**4. How Deep The Lord's Reach Is!**

- The Lord's Reach Can Go Very, Very Deep!
  - And We See This In His Reach:
    - To The Great Fish He Sent To Rescue Jonah From Drowning In The Mediterranean Sea!
  - In 1:17 - "Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights!"
    - God Could Reach Deep Into The Sea:
      - To Provide Just The Right Vehicle To Deliver Jonah!
    - Remember What We Learned About That Fish?

- Everything About The Fish Was Just Right!
- It Had To Be:
  - The Right Kind Of Fish!
    - It Had To Be A “Great” Fish & Large Enough To Swallow Jonah & Then To Hold Him Safely Within Its Belly For 3 Whole Days!
- And It Had To Be:
  - In The Right Place At The Right Time!
- And There Was No Place Too Deep:
  - That The Lord Could Not Reach – With His **Provision!**
    - To Save & To Help In Time Of Need!
      - Not Just Jonah! But You & Me & Others!
- Look At How Deep Jesus Even Had To Go:
  - To Provide The Salvation We Needed!
    - And The Salvation That Others Need As Well!
  - Philippians 2:5-8 - “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: / Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: / But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: / And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross!”
    - And Jesus Went Even Deeper, When His Body Was Buried In A Tomb Carved Into The Earth!
  - And He Did All This:
    - Not For His Own Sin! Because He Had None!
    - But For Your Sin! My Sin!
    - And To Provide Everything We Need For Our Salvation!
- The Lord’s Reach Is Very, Very Deep!
  - Nothing! And Noone Is Out Of His Reach!

\* And Last, See Not Only Where God Can Reach, But Also At:

5. ***How Quick The Lord’s Reach Is!***

- The Lord’s Reach Can Be Very, Very Quick!
  - And We See How Fast His Reach Can Be:
    - When He Reaches Jonah At The Last Possible Moment – To Save Him!
  - In 2:6 - In Jonah’s Prayer, He Remembers What It Was Like As He Was Drowning & Almost Died - “I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God!”
    - It Was About Over For Jonah!
  - But It Seems From His Prayer:
    - That At The Last Possible Moment!
    - Perhaps At Jonah’s Last Breath!
  - God Reached Out To Save Jonah:
    - Suddenly & Quickly!
    - When The Fish Swallowed Jonah Whole!
  - Here, Jonah Was:
    - Saved: “As A Brand Plucked Out Of The Fire!”
    - Just In The Nick Of Time!
- And That Is Just How Quickly:
  - The Lord Can Reach You & Anyone:
    - With His **Pardon!**
      - To Rescue You – Not Just From Death!
      - But To Redeem You – From Your Sin!
- Think About Those Thieves:
  - Who Were On The Two Crosses Right Next To Jesus:
    - As He Was Dying!
  - Those Thieves:
    - Had Lived Their Lives As Sinners & Rebels:
      - Against The Laws Of Both God And Man!
    - And They Were Being Punished:
      - For Their Crimes!
  - And When It Seemed Like It Was Over For Them!

- One Of Those Thieves Was Touched By God To Believe & Trust In The One Who Was Dying On The Cross Next To Him!
- And In Mark 23:40-43 - That Thief Said To The Other - “Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? / And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. / And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. / And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise!”
- And That Quickly:
  - The Lord Was Able To Reach & Save That Thief On The Cross!
- The Lord’s Reach Is Very, Very Quick!
  - He Can Save Anyone Who Calls Out To Him:
    - Even When It Seems Like It Is At The Last Possible Moment!
  - Jonah Was Rescued:
    - When It Seemed Like He Was About To Drown!
  - The Sailors Were Saved:
    - When It Seemed Like They Were About To Sink!
  - And Even The Ninevites:
    - Were Delivered!
    - When It Seemed Like They Were Just About To Receive The Judgment Of God For Their Sin!

**Conclusion:**

1. And This Is What The Reach Of God Is Like:
  - As We See In The Book Of Jonah!
  - The Reach Of God Is:
    - Very, Very Far!
    - Very, Very Wide!
    - Very, Very High!
    - Very, Very Deep!
    - And Very, Very Quick!
2. And God Can Reach Even You!
  - With His:
    - Mercy & His Grace!
  - With His:
    - Peace & His Power!
  - With His:
    - Provision & His Pardon!
3. Do Not Think:
  - That You Are Too Far Away From The Reach Of God!
  - And Do Not Think:
    - That Others Are Too Far Away To Be Reached By God Either!
  - Instead:
    - Be A Missionary - As God Called Jonah To Be!
    - And “Arise & Go & Cry” Out To Others:
      - About This God Who Is Never Out Of Reach!
4. “Wonderful grace of Jesus, Reaching the most defiled, By its transforming power, Making him God’s dear child, Purchasing peace and heaven, For all eternity; And the wonderful grace of Jesus reaches me!” (Haldor Lillenas)
  - And It Reaches You!

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